

# Simplify the Journey

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## **Financial Benefits, Supports, and Services for Young Adults with Disabilities**

Lydia Sheehey  
January 16, 2026

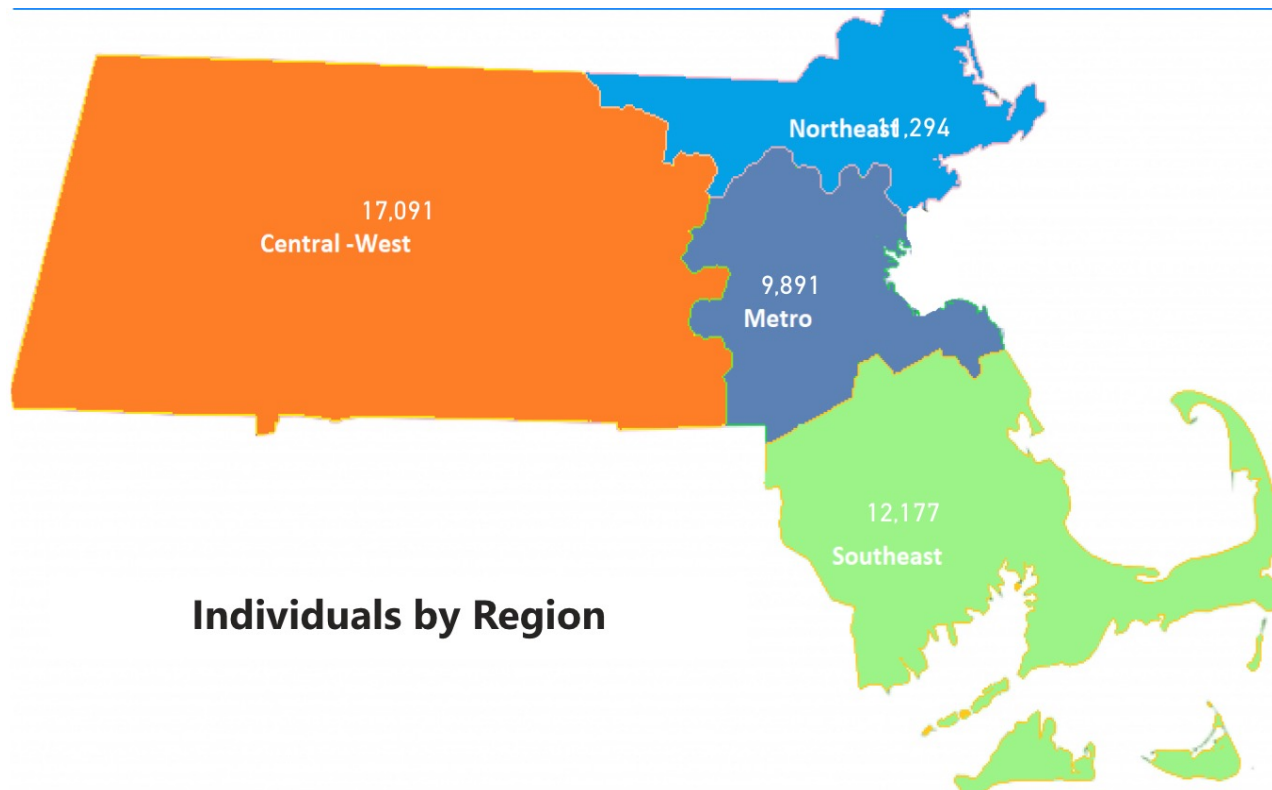


## Lydia Sheehey

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- Andover resident since 2017
  - Relocated from New Jersey
  - 29+ years in the financial services industry
  - Mother of four adult children
  - Two children have autism
  - Networked with parents and professionals
  - Researched financial benefits, supports, and services
  - Simplify the Journey started organically
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# MA Department of Developmental Services Serves 50,087 People

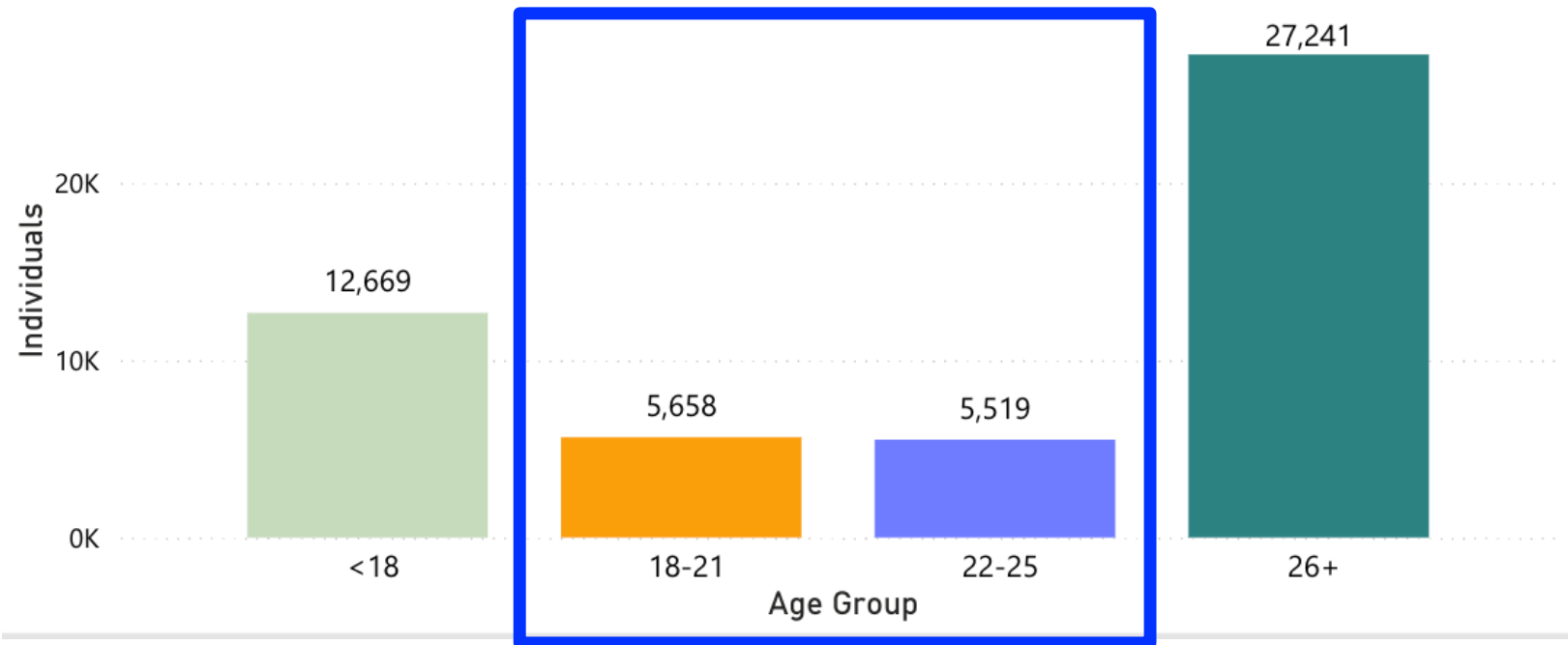


Region	Individuals Served
Central-West	17,091
Southeast	12,177
Northeast	10,928
<u>Metro</u>	<u>9,891</u>
Total	50,087

# MA Department of Developmental Services Serves 50,087 People

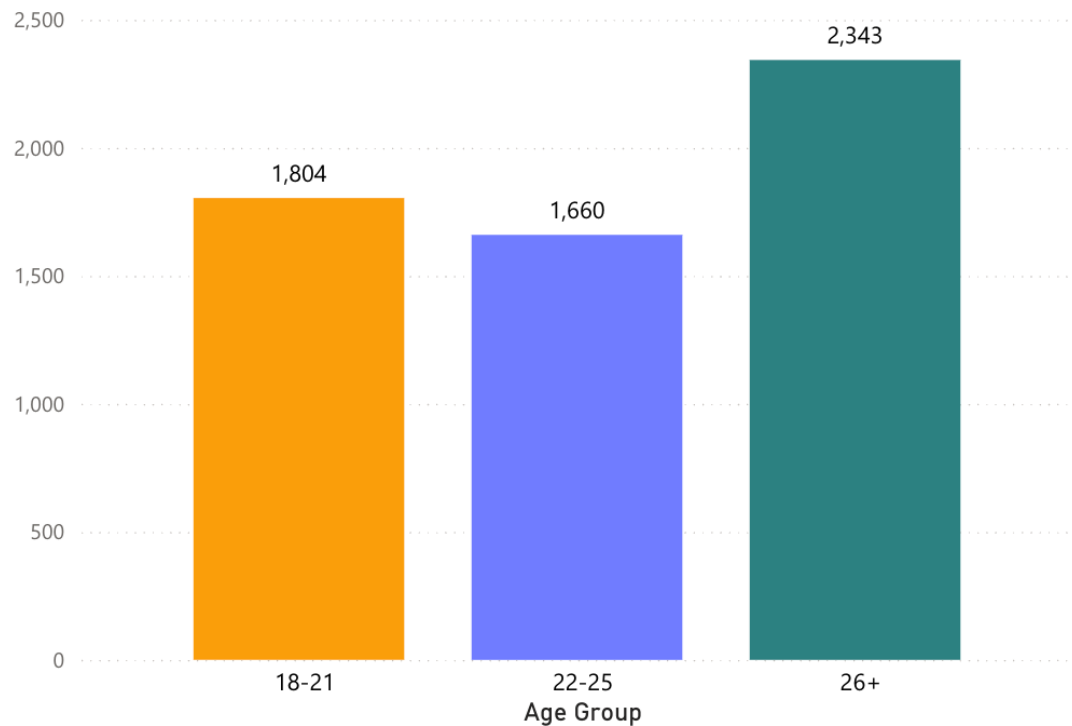
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Individuals By Age Group



# 2014 Real Lives Law Mandated DDS to Provide Services to the Autism Community

Autism Individuals By Age Group



## Autism Population

5,807 individuals served by DDS

~ 12% of total DDS population

# Simplify the Journey Services

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**Receive Guidance, Coaching, and Resources  
from an Experience Parent Navigating  
the Massachusetts Adult Special Needs System  
of Financial Benefits, Supports, and Services for Many Years**

**One-on-One Consultations**

**Workshops and Trainings**

**Speaking Engagements**

# Navigating the Adult Special Needs System

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## Financial Benefits

- Supplemental Security Income - SSI
- Social Security Disability Insurance - SSDI
- Working on Disability
- MassHealth & Medicare
- MassHealth Premium Assistance
- Private Health Insurance: Age 26 and Beyond
- SNAP Benefits

## Section 8 Housing Waiting Lists

- Portable / Mobile Vouchers
- Site-based Housing

## Financial Planning

- ABLE Accounts
- Special Needs Trusts

## Services and Supports from Government Agencies

- Department of Developmental Services (DDS)
- MassAbility

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[www.SimplifytheJourney.net](http://www.SimplifytheJourney.net)



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